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VETERANS' AFFAIRS

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510 - 3505

July, 26 2023

Mr. Alan Shaw
President and CEO
Norfolk Southern Corporation
650 W. Peachtree Street NW
Atlanta, GA 30308

Mr. Shaw:

I am writing once again to express my concern about dilapidated rail bridges owned by Norfolk Southern. Recent reporting by WKRC Local 12 has highlighted that Norfolk Southern's bridges in Butler County have deteriorated, some exhibiting cracks or crumbling concrete, which poses risks to travelers that pass under the bridges, and the community wants to be assured that trains will safely pass when traveling on the bridges. I request a list of all inquiries expressing concern about the condition of rail bridges from Ohio government officials and, additionally, I am requesting that Norfolk Southern provide me with specifically tailored action plan for how your company will fix the bridges in Butler County and address concerns raised by the County Engineer.

Specifically, Norfolk Southern's Butler County bridges over Hamilton Mason Road and Princeton Road are actively degrading and worrying residents. The County Engineer, local news sources, and residents have all reported debris routinely falling from the bridge. This kind of decay, especially for a bridge in the center of a populated area, is very concerning, and it appears that the Butler County Engineer's Office has express concern about multiple Norfolk Southern bridges in Butler County.

I am also very concerned to hear that the Butler County Engineer has had a difficult time getting your company to respond to their concerns. The Butler County Engineer would not raise questions about the condition of Norfolk Southern's bridges unless, in his professional judgement based on years of engineering experience, the condition of the bridges in question was indeed concerning.

Time after time, I've heard from Ohioans across the state who are concerned that old and dilapidated rail infrastructure poses a threat to local economies and residents' safety. In too many cases, Class 1 railroads like Norfolk Southern have failed to properly maintain and repair the bridges and other rail infrastructure in Ohio, leaving local communities to deal with the consequences.

Prior requests for information on the status of your company's bridges in Ohio and an action plan for how your company will address any needed repairs to rail bridges have resulted in an inadequate response. Simply citing the process for the public release of bridge inspection reports through the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is insufficient. Adherence to the process for the release of inspection reports does not prevent your company from providing information to my office, the Butler County Engineer, and the public about deteriorated conditions and your company's plans, if any, to undertake repairs.

At a very minimum, I request a list of all inquiries expressing concern about the condition of rail bridges from Ohio government officials, including county engineers and elected officials. I ask that Norfolk Southern provide this information so that I can work with local officials and the Federal Railroad Administration to provide complete transparency to the public on the status of your company's bridges.

I am also requesting that Norfolk Southern provide a specifically tailored action plan for how your company will fix the bridges in Butler County and address concerns raised by the County Engineer. Norfolk Southern is responsible for this infrastructure, and has a duty to proactively invest a fair share of revenues into properly maintaining tracks and bridges within the local communities that host your trains.

I expect a prompt and full response to the requests in this letter.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator